

W. B. AN
ESSAY
ON
GRIEF:

With
The CAUSES and
REMEDIES of It.

*Durum: sed levius fit patientia,
- Quicquid corrigere est nefas. Hor.*

OXFORD,
Printed by *L. Lichfield*, for
Henry Clements, and *John*
Howell Booksellers. 1695.



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Imprimatur,

HEN. ALDRICH,

Vice-Car. OXON.

Mar. 6. }
169⁴. }



To
THE HONOUR'D
M^{RS.} M. LAKE.

Madam,

SINCE they who
may justly chal-
lenge those admired
Qualities, which are
become the common
Forms of a Dedic-
tion, are generally dis-
pleased with Addresses
of that nature; I shall
omit that undisputed
Title you have to such
Excellencies, and beg
* 2 leave

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The EPISTLE

leave to inform the
World, how much
it is indebted to you
for a just Example
of what Respect we
ought to pay to the
Memory of our De-
ceased Friends: E-
specially when they
were adorned with all
those Endowments,
which were so con-
spicuous in Your Ex-
cellent Brother: Who
besides those Accom-
plishments w^{ch} com-
mand-

DEDICATORY.

manded an Universal
Esteem, join'd the
Affection of a Friend
to that of so near
a Relation: which
makes it difficult to
determine whether he
deserv'd, or you ex-
prest the greater Sor-
row. It was my fre-
quent Reflection up-
on this, that first
mov'd me to this At-
tempt; which how-
ever mean in it self,
will have enough to
re-

The EPISTLE
recommmend it, if hon-
our'd with your Pro-
tection: Which I the
more confidently pre-
sume upon, since that
Relation it bears to
you (as you have had
the justest Cause of
Grief, have shewn the
most tender Sense of
it, and yet none ever
more religiously Con-
quer'd it) makes it
wholly yours. I design
not, MADAM, by this
Discourse to Accuse
you

DEDICATORY.

you of any Neglect,
but only to shew what
you have Practic'd,
and by Copying out
your Behaviour teach
others their Duty.
I am sensible by the
Advantage of so Emi-
nent a Pattern, much
more might be said
upon the Subject, and
that too, much bet-
ter treated of: But
if this rude and un-
polisht Essay may ob-
tain the Happiness of
be-

The EPISTLE &c.
being receiv'd as a Te-
stimony of my Grati-
tude, for the frequent
Obligations both His
and Your Favours
have laid upon me,
all other Defects will
be abundantly sup-
ply'd, and I shall at-
tain the chief End
and Honour I pro-
pos'd by it, of being
Esteem'd

MADAM,

Your most Oblig'd,
And humble Servant,

R. W.

O F

G R I E F *in General.*

THough the Soul of Man depends upon the Senses for its first Knowledge or Ideas of External Objects, yet it has this Priviledge peculiar to it self, above any of the mere Sensitive Beings, that in the absence of Objects, it can revive, view, and consider them at its Pleasure. In this *Retirement*, the Mind makes its most severe Reflections, compares one thing with another,

nother, and sets a Value upon each, according to that Opinion it conceives of it. Some things it passes over with a more transient View, not esteeming them worth the Expence of a Thought; others it retains longer in its Memory, either pleasing or disquieting it self with the Remembrance of them. From hence proceed *Satisfaction* and *Pleasure* on the one hand, *Sorrow* and *Uneasiness* on the other. This we may call the *Misery*, the other the *Happiness* of the *Mind*.

When the Mind is immoderate in any of these, and turns the whole bent of its

On G R I E F. 3

its Thoughts and Inclinations upon an *Object*, then it exceeds the Bounds of Reason, becomes an irregular *Passion*, and falls into *Extreams*. If it be long indulg'd, it contracts a *Habit* in us; and will with great Difficulty be remov'd, and reduc'd to the Obedience of Reason.

From hence we may gather the true Notions of the chief of all our Passions, *Joy* and *Grief*; with the Excess and Irregularities of them. For they are always Innocent when they are *moderated*, and are only blameable in their *Excess*. For

the same reason that permits us to tast and enjoy with Pleasure a Good that we desire, does not forbid us sorrowing for the loss of it ; Provided we neither disorder our *Reason*, nor transgress the Bounds of *Religion*.

I call these the Chief of our Passions, because all the Pleasure or Pain which we find in the Soul upon any account whatsoever, may be reduc'd to one of these. Whether I *Love* or *Hate*, *Hope* or *Fear*, *Envy* or *Admire*, it produces in me either some inward Satisfaction or Uneasiness, and consequently

On G R I E F. 5

frequently, I can't avoid in
some measure either Re-
joycing or Sorrowing at it.

*Grief in General, is an Un-
easiness of the Mind, arising
from the Sense of a Good lost,
or a present Evil.* The Seat
of this Passion is in the Soul;
for Reflection and Thought
(upon the Evil that we suf-
fer) which are the chief
Action, if not Essence of the
Soul, give Life and Being
to it. And here again we
may distinguish the true
Notion of this *Passion* from
the Vices of it. For to *grieve*
at a present Evil, which is
really such, so as to avoid it
for the future, is Commend-

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really such, so as to avoid it
for the future, is Commend-

able and Praise-Worthy ; but to *Grieve* at any thing which my Opinion only makes to be Evil, which is not really so in it self, carries the Nature of a great Imperfection, if not of a Sin along with it. *As for Instance*, If I have done any thing, either through Ignorance or against my Knowledge, which my Conscience accuses me of, it is my Duty to be Sincerely *griev'd* at the Remembrance of it, and endeavour by all means possible, to avoid incurring the same Guilt for the future. But if the Occasion of my *Grief* be something that
was

was without my self, as the loss of *Honours, Riches*, or the like, which are not in mine own Power, but at the Disposal and Appointment of *Providence*, then to Grieve is to exceed the Reason and Nature of it ; Because as the Enjoyment of them was never design'd to make us entirely Happy, so neither can the Loss of them make us really Miserable.

But in this case also, *Grief* may be so far allowable, as it respects the Causes of my Misfortunes. If my Extravagance and Prodigality have been the causes of my Poverty, it is then my Duty

to be *griev'd* at the thoughts of those ill Actions which have brought that upon me. But I must then be very cautious, lest I should think any thing disrespectfully of Providence; and take care that my Sorrow be chiefly for my Sin, and not for the Poverty of my Condition. In short, then is my *Grief* true and sincere, when it proceeds from the Sence of my Guilt, and not from that of my Sufferings; When the Cause of my Unhappiness, not the Unhappiness it self, is the Object of it.

I would not be thought to say, That we ought to aban-

On G R I E F. 9

abandon all our Passions as to External Objects, so as to use all with the same Indifference : For we can't help being delighted with Some more than Others : but only, that we should not discover so great a Concern for any of them, as to suffer our Happiness or Misery to depend upon the Enjoyment or Loss of them. And herein that Notion of *Vertue's* consisting between two Extreams, may be applied to the *Passions*. For as they ought not to shew too great fondness of Sensible Objects, so neither ought they to use them with Contempt. A

moderation towards all outward Enjoyments is very necessary to our Happiness. If we are always careful, not to be Excessive in our *Pleasure* and *Delights*, we shall never be dejected with our *Misfortune*. For he that keeps not his Passions within Bounds on the one Hand, will upon any Disappointment, fall into Extreams on the Other.

I speak now of *Passions* only as they are conversant about Objects of Sense. For when they are fix'd on Divine *Objects*, they can't properly be said, to run into Excess; for 'twould be very ab-

ON G R I E F. 11

absurd to say, we could *love* GOD too much. And although there are some mistaken ways and modes of Worship which carry Men into Superstition, yet it is not the *height* of Love or Affection that is the Cause of it. For *Passion* is no longer true and regular than it is guided by *Reason* and *Revelation*.

But notwithstanding all the Nice speculative Notions that we conceive of the *Passions* ; yet the Best of Men have been overtaken by Irregular Motions: either carried away by a sudden Transport of Joy, or de-

dejected with the Surprize of an unexpected Calamity. Though this can't properly be said to be the Nature of the Passions, but only the Imperfection of our present State, because as they are acts of the Mind, and have their chief Power from thence, so they can have no separate Interest from it, nor be really delighted with the Objects of Sense, which can bring no true Satisfaction to the Mind: yet so long as we are confin'd to this Mortal State, and the Soul acts conjunctly with the Body, it can never acquire such an Absolute Authority over it,

as

as not to comply, and share with it, in some of its *Delights*, and *Calamities*.

But although we can't free our selves from the Objects of Sense ; yet however we ought by all means to endeavour , to be as little subject to them as possible, and to raise our *Passions* above the reach of their Temptations. For as the Causes of Passions are generally from without , so Nature has fortified us with sufficient Power within, to resist the strongest Assault they can make upon us.

And here again we may observe that the true Use
and

and Nature of this Passion of *Grief*, as of all the rest consists in its Obedience to the Dictates and Prescription of Reason; considered either in its *Natural Light*, or assisted by the advantage of *Revelation*. The first can convince us of our Errors, but can't reform them; the other not only discovers to us the Disorders and Imperfections of our Natural State, but gives us Power and Strength to rectify them.

But besides, that we may not be deceiv'd in Judging of our *Passions*, whether they are agreeable to *Reason* or not, it will be necessary to
con-

consider whether they are
fix'd upon their due Object.
We must not look so much
upon the Passions that we
find in Good Men, as the cau-
ses of them. *Anger, Sorrow,*
and *Fear* may proceed from
just Occasions, and may be
designed to very great Ends.
To be angry with a Sinner,
so as to correct and reform
him ; To *grieve* with those
in Misery and Affliction,
out of a Design to relieve
and comfort them ; and to
be afraid for those in dan-
ger, so as to hinder them
from perishing ; are all so
far from being *Crimes*, that
they deserve to be number'd

amongst the chiefeſt of *Ver-*
tues.

In the next place, we muſt conſider whether our Paſſions are proportionable to the Object, and whether we do not eſteem things more or leſs than they deſerve, whether we do not purſue things indifferent, with greater Ardency and Affection than we do thoſe which are of greateſt Concern and *Importance* to us. By theſe Methods we may judge of the Conformity of our Paſſions to the true Nature and Deſigns of them. And we may hence alſo obſerve what Progreſs we make in *Ver-*
tue

Ver- tue and Religion, by considering, of what Value and Esteem they are to us, and whether They, or the things of Sense have the First or chief place in our *Affections*.

Nature has disposed the Parts of Man in a due Subordination to each Other, & has subjected the Inferior, as the *Sensitive Appetite*, to the superior Faculty of the *Understanding*. And if this Harmony is not justly observed, the Whole becomes disordered.

Thus when our Passions of *Joy* or *Grief* are carried away by outward Objects, and rely only upon the Judgment

ment of Sense, without consulting the Precepts of *Reason*, then is that Correspondence of the Faculties dissolved, & that *Union* which ought to be between them wholly destroyed. Hence arises that Notion of dividing the Passions into *Sensitive* and *Rational*. This depends upon Reason, the other refuses its Conduct, and denies its Authority.

Though our *Passions* are so far Regular, as they are governed by *Reason*, yet herein also they may be disorderly, unless we take care to inform our *Reason* aright. Prejudice may have got the
Ascen-

ON GRIEF. 17

Ascendant over our *Reason*:
or else some wild extrava-
gant Notions may have ob-
scur'd it, or led it Captive
by an appearance of Truth.
And therefore we have a
Rule to measure *Reason* by,
that it may not be disorder'd
in it self, or give occasion to
the Inferior *Faculties* to run
into Confusion. And to this
End, (as I before intimated)
Providence has took care of
us, and revealed to us the
Will and Council of Heaven
it self, to discover to us the
difference of those things
which ought to be the Ob-
jects of our Passions, from
those of our Indifference,
which

which we should not be much concerned for.

But to return. This Passion of *Grief* depends in some upon the *Constitution, Frame* or *Habit* of their Bodies. And as these are disposed, so is their Passion more or less strong and violent, and the first Object it meets with produces some Alteration of Motion in them. They are generally hurried on to the Aversion of an Object, without any Thought or Deliberation, and are often disturbed at Shadows and Trifles. These are very Unhappy who are almost ever disquieted ; and therefore want
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the greatest Attention and
Observance to manage them-
selves rightly, and have as
much need of outward, as
inward Medicines to be ap-
plied to them.

Some are more apt to be
passionate than Others, and
what will not move One, is
perhaps the cause of Misery
to another. Some, again, are
more Thoughtful than O-
thers, and upon such Persons,
unless their Thoughts are
fixt upon higher Objects
that divert them, Sorrow
commonly falls more heavy,
and is more difficultly re-
mov'd. Their Spirits are ge-
nerally low, and consequent-
ly

ly more easily oppress'd, and where they have once fix'd their thoughts, they become Obstinate and almost Immoveable. For their Mind by long custome is reduc'd almost to the same habit with their Body, and till this be cur'd, and brought to the right use of the Senses, it will be difficult to reduce the Mind to its power of *Reason*.

But of all the different kinds of *Grief*, that is *strongest*, and most *violent*, which flatters it self with Reason to defend it. For where the Mind thinks it may with Honour and Vertue engage
its

its Affections to an Object, as is apparent in *Friendship*, it is apt to conclude that it may by the same reason lament the *Loss* of that which so happily cemented it: and that it can't be too immoderate in lamenting its being depriv'd of that Happiness, which Vertue and Religion so much approved of.

From this mistake it is that a great many People indulge themselves in *Sorrow*, who have in all other Misfortunes of Life, Reason and Religion enough to support them. But how groundless this Opinion is, may appear, by considering, that
there

there are several Objects which we may highly esteem and admire, which they are in our Possession which we ought patiently and submissively to resign when *Providence* thinks convenient, to require them of us. For even Life it self which ought to be most Dear to us, is to be no longer the subject of our Desire than *Providence* orders the Continuance and Preservation of it. And if any End or Service of Religion commands our Resignment of it we ought to do it with the same Readiness, that *GOD* Commands the Duty.

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On G R I E F. 25

jects, But although the Joys of
ly e- the *Mind* are confessedly
while greater than those of the
ssion, *Body*, yet while they are thus
ently united, they must always
esign, partake together in the En-
nks it joyment of an Object that's
them Dear to them, because their
it self, Joy can never be compleat
most or satisfying, unless they
onger both agree in the same In-
esires, clinations, (as is apparent
rs the in a great many sensual De-
serva- lights, which are attended
End or with stings and gripes of
com- Conscience, because the In-
t of it, ward Dictates of Reason
th the and Religion contradict
G O D them, and whisper to us
their unlawfulness) so nei-

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ther

ther can they separate their common *Sorrow*, for the loss of that which was an equal Satisfaction to Both. And hereupon it is, that *Joy* and *Sorrow* are sometimes so very Affecting, that there are several who have fainted and sunk away under Both. They are no better able to bear a sudden Surprize of *Joy*, than they can moderate their Passions under an unlookt for *Calamity*; Both over-power their Spirits, and they prove too weak to bear up against them.

All which seem to concur in the Convincing us, that the Soul is capable of Greater

er Joy and Sorrow, than the Body is able to bear, since this often faints away, with an Excess of either : and may also be of use to demonstrate to us , that our Souls were designed for another State besides this, since the *Body*, in that Frame especially which it now is, cannot come up to that Perfection, which the *Soul* is endued with.

Thus have I shown what *Grief* is, and wherein it consists. I shall now search into the different Causes that produce it in the Minds of Men. And then I shall endeavour to offer some Prefer-

vatives and Helps against it, whereby we may be able to regulate it, prevent the Excesses of it, and confine it within the limits of Reason and Religion. If we take these for our Guides in all our Actions, we shall be patient and content in all Conditions ; we shall neither ground our *Hopes*, or *Fears*, *Joys* or *Sorrows* on Uncertainties, but shall at last find to our unspeakable Satisfaction, that they will both conspire together, in Leading us to the same End, the *Perfection* of our *Nature*, and the full and entire Possession of all *Happiness*.

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But here it may be Objected,
that there are so many Mife-
ries of Life, such frequent and
unthought of Dangers and
Calamities, which are con-
tinually thronging in upon
us, and which make this
State uneasy and uncomfor-
table to us, that it would be
a Vain Attempt to think of
Obtaining an absolute Con-
quest over them, and pre-
venting their being an *Im-*
pediment to us in our Way
to Happiness.

To this it may be an-
swer'd, That 'tis our Weak-
ness and Cowardice in resist-
ing, that makes these Ene-
mies so formidable to us. A

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vigorous Opposition would soon make them appear less Terrible. The greatest Danger and Difficulty is in the first Encounter ; If we can withstand that Couragiously the Event must necessarily prove successful to us. For all the Forces that these Enemies have, are purely owing to our own Opinion, and as that changes, so will those disappear. The Victory depends upon our own Will and Pleasure, and if we have Resolution enough to Conquer, we shall never want Force and Strength to do it. And certainly, that *Happiness* which this Victory will make

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make us Masters of, ought
to engage us in the pursuit
after it, notwithstanding all
the Dangers that may threa-
ten us in the way to it. Me-
thinks a *Comfortable* and *Con-
tented* Life, such as every
Reflection upon may create
new Pleasure and Delight in
us; and at last a peaceable,
serene, and chearful Death,
with a joyful Prospect of a-
nother Life, is a Happi-
ness that ought to be pur-
chas'd at any Rate; though
at the first there may appear
some *Difficulties* to encoun-
ter, *Miseries* to undergo, and
Evils to suffer, before we
can arrive at the Possession
of it. B 4 But

But besides it may be Objected, that there are some that never feel *Miseries*, and have no Disappointments to grieve at: and therefore *Grief* is not so General as we Imagine; or at least, the only Preservative against it, is, to follow the Example of these Men who are never sensible of it.

To this, I can only say That this Treatise was not designed for such. For it would be a vain Endeavour to go about to perswade the Senceless, Stupid, and Unthinking, that there is such a thing as Sorrow. They know no Happiness beyond them

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themselves, their Thoughts are few, and confin'd to a very narrow Compass. They have no Joy or Sorrow, but what some sudden, and undesign'd change of Countenance draws from them, and this perhaps without their own Knowledge or Observation. To such as these it would be in vain to talk of Reason, unless we could first make them understand what it is to be Men. But if any One shall still urge, that these are Happy ; I can only answer, that Happiness would be a very mean Enjoyment, if we should not be sensible of it. For I think

a *rational* Being can partake of no *real Happiness*, but what by just and unprejudic'd Reason it finds to be so. I suppose I may therefore pass on to shew the Cause of Grief, and seek out wise Methods for securing ourselves against it, than these Men take up with.

O F

The CAUSES of
G R I E F.

THe shortness of Man's Life in General, as well as the *Deaths* of those, who are most Dear to us, is become the subject of our daily *Complaint*. And yet was Man to live here for ever, and be liable to the same Calamities, Troubles and Vexations which even the Best of Men now labour under,

O F

der, we should esteem it the Greatest of Miseries. Every day brings some disquiet along with it, and if we are so happy as to get rid of that, we yet find still more Troubles that oppress us, and a new succession of *Grievances* to complain of.

Every little Disappointment disturbs us, and we can scarce get one minute of Ease, before innumerable unthought of Calamities come thronging in upon us. We can promise our selves Security in nothing that we Enjoy, nor Certainty in any thing that we hope for. When we imagine we are
sur-

surrounded with nothing but the Comforts and Pleasures of Life, a little Enlargement of *Thought* discovers to us, that our Joys are not without a great mixture of Uneasiness. We find ourselves encompassed with Dangers and Disturbances, which we must always be afraid of, obnoxious to Infirmities, which we can neither prevent, nor redress, subject to Wants which we cannot supply, and liable to *Fears* which we are unable to provide against.

Jealousies, Cares, and Anxieties, are the necessary Companions of all that we
can

can here call our own. Whilst we promise our selves an Age of Happiness in the fruition of something that is Dear to us, the *Fears* that we find in our selves lest we should be deprived of it, will be often interrupting our Delights, and so far prevail upon our Thoughts, as to sink our Spirits and pall even our sweetest Pleasures in the very Enjoyment.

Had we nothing but the satisfaction this Life can give us, to depend upon, every thing in it would soon become nauseous to us. The more we tast of it, the more we discover how insufficient it is for
our

On G R I E F. 39

our *Happiness* ; and how vain we are in our Hopes and Desires, of a great many things, which are not in our power to obtain, and yet if we should obtain them, they are not able to satisfy us. We are always complaining of Want , yet know not what it is that will content us. We are uneasy in such a Condition, and therefore extend our Wishes to something else, which when Possess'd, we find we still want something more to desire , and that we have not found an End, but only a Change of our Miseries.

We are soon surfeited
with

with our own Happiness, and what was one moment the Object of our Admiration, is the next that of our Contempt. We are always longing for a Change, and our best Delights so quickly cloy us, that we are uneasy till they are relieved with a new Scene of Pleasures ; yet when we have enjoy'd these, we are still as uneasy as before, and turn our Thoughts and Wishes upon something else, which in the end proves as little satisfactory as the former. Thus our Life is only an eager pursuit after something New ; As though our whole *Happiness* consisted

ed in nothing else but Variety and Novelty.

This is the State and Condition of Man's Life in General, always desiring something that he wants, or endeavouring to ease himself of something that's troublesome to him. Both these are the Causes of his Sorrow, and will always be disquieting him, while he courts an Imaginary *Happiness*, which slips away, when he thinks he has the fastest hold of it.

These ought to be the subject of our daily Considerations. For if we take care to inform our selves aright, of the Miseries and Troubles
we

we ought to expect, we shall be able to prevent the dismal Effects of them : we shall keep our Reason firm and unshaken by all their Force and Violence ; and though they may hinder us from being perfectly Happy , yet they can never makes us Miserable.

If we consider Man thro' the different Stages and Passages of Life, we shall find that his Expectations of true *Happiness* , and *Satisfaction* hereBelow are only vain and unreasonable. Dangers and Difficulties , Troubles and Disappointments, are so nearly interwoven with our Nature

ture, more than any other part of the Creation, that a narrow search into our Constitution, would almost make us acknowledge, that Man alone was design'd to Suffer and be made miserable. As it were, on purpose to shew us, that the right exercise of Reason, was design'd for higher and nobler Ends, than to be employ'd on the Objects of Sense : and that the Imperfections of our Natural State, would make us desire and seek after One more perfect : would make us acknowledge, that our dependance is wholly upon Him, who alone can give us that
Hap-

Happiness, which we here in vain seek to find : and how great a Folly and Madness it is, to set our Minds upon Trifles, especially to the neglect of the most serious, and necessary Duties of our Lives, and the most important End of our Being. And as Nature has supplied all other Beings with what is necessary for their Security and Preservation, and has provided them means for their own Support, almost as soon as Born, whereby they seem not to have so much need of a *Deity* : so is *Man* taught by those Natural Defects he comes into the World with,
and

and by those continual wants which he is not able to supply, to acknowledge himself more peculiarly the Care of *Providence*, and beg its assistance and support under all the Miseries and *Afflictions* of Life.

Let us suppose Man just come into the World; we shall find him neither Master of himself, nor any thing besides: Helpless, and destitute of means for his own Preservation; a *Slave* to the Miseries and Inconveniences of Life. *Tears, Weakness, and Infirmities* continually attending on him, defective in the use both of Body and
Rea-

Reason. Yet 'tis an *Age* that in this is more Happy and Perfect than any other part of Man's Life, that it hath neither *Sense* to perceive, nor *Reason* to reflect on its miserable Condition.

After *Infancy* and *Childhood*, follows *Youth*, hurried on by violent Heats, and unruly Passions : without either *Judgment* to discern what is Praise worthy, or *Prudence* to guide its Actions, or correct its *Follies*.

Tull. de Con-
solat. *Towards Superiors*
*Proud and Contem-
ptuous, Fierce and Savage to-
wards its Equals, and towards*
*its Inferiors, Insolent and Ar-
rogant.*

rogant. Despising whatsoever is Laudable and Vertuous, and eagerly pursuing Vanities and false Pleasures. Easily drawn aside by Lust and Envy, without making the least Opposition against them. Seldom hearkning to the Commands of Vertue or Reason, and wholly impatient of Reproof and Instruction. In a word, Man is then Inconsiderate, Light and Inconstant in all his Actions, always following the Bent of his present Inclinations: without either sense of Duty, Friendship or Gratitude. As careless of his own, as of others Reputation. Ever coveting

ing what he admires in Others, and yet Extravagant and Profuse of what he has himself. Prodigal of what he enjoys at present, careless and Improvident of what may happen for the future. From all which, at length proceed innumerable Troubles, Contumelies and Contentions. Infamy and Obloquy fall upon him from without : and serious Reflections upon his past Follies raise as great Disturbances within.

These are the Evils and Mischiefs which these unthinking Years are most liable to ; and though there are some, who have early imbib'd

bib'd the Principles of *Ver-*
tue and *Generosity*, and whom
 an Happy *Education* hath
 prevented from falling into
 those Ill *Habits* and vicious
Courses, which Others have
 enslaved themselves to ; yet
 can't we therefore conclude
 that Youth is less obnox-
 ious to those Evils and In-
 conveniencies , since there
 are but very few who have
 so far Conquer'd the Vio-
 lence of their *Passions*, as
 not to be captivated by
 their Irregular motions.
 And those too who are most
 secure are not exempted
 from infinite Dangers and
 Misfortunes. *Envy, Malice,*
 C and

and *Detraction* threaten and assault them from abroad; and their own Passions of *Love, Fear, Grief*, or the like, will notwithstanding all their care and caution, so far get the Ascendant over their Reason, as often to disturb if not wholly oppress them. *Love* is a Passion so strongly rooted in our Nature, and especially apt to be most violent in our *Youth*, that whatsoever we make the Object of it, we can't forego the Loss of it, without great Dissatisfaction, Reluctancy, and Uneasiness.

Nor

Nor do our Miseries leave us with our *Youth*, as Age encreases, so our Troubles too. And when we are grown up, our longer Experience of Life only leads us to a wider Prospect, and a more severe tryal of the most dangerous Evils and Mischiefs that attend it. Hurry, and Business, publick and private Cares are continually distracting us: and Reason which should now more especially be the guide and measure of our Thoughts and Actions, seems to have the least share in them. We suffer our Thoughts to soar high, and

are strongly bent upon Desires, beyond our Reach, and out of our Power to obtain; neither considering the Folly of our Wishes, nor the Pain and Uneasiness, that our violent and restless Desires necessarily bring upon us. We admire every thing at a distance, but when we have a nearer View of it, it falls short of our Expectations, and the Enjoyment of it proves unsatisfactory.

Avarice and *Ambition* are Vices all of us in some measure are corrupted with, and though we can't but be sensible of the Fears, Cares, and Troubles; the Envy,
Ha-

Hatred and Malice, they unavoidably expose us to, yet still we are as eager in the pursuit of our Designs, as though we expected a Real Happiness from them. *How miserable, says Seneca, as well as short is their Life, that compass with great Labour, what they possess with greater, and hold with Anxiety, what they acquire with Trouble.* Our aims are at being Great, and all our Arts and Methods are directed to that One end, which at the best, is a State of Life the most slippery and uncertain of all others. For the higher we rise, we still make no ad-

dition to our Happiness, unless it be by directing us to the Search after it ; I mean, by discovering to us the Weakness and Imperfection of our Nature, the Extravagance of its Desires, the Uncertainty of its Enjoyments, and the Impossibility of finding a solid or lasting Satisfaction in them. And by teaching us that the most Perfect, and Real Happiness of this Life, depends upon the certain Hopes and Expectations of a Better.

But above all, our State is never more dangerous and deplorable, than when we delude our selves, and
cover

cover our Vices, under the plausible Pretences of Vertue. And make use of our Affections to the flattering and betraying our Understanding and Will. We use all means possible to heap up Wealth, out of a pretence of doing good to Others, and sacrifice the Ease and Quiet of our Life, to some cold Designs of Charity, which we can never put in Execution, while our desires of Riches encrease, which seldom end but with our Lives. We imagine that Greatness is the only thing Honour'd and Reverenc'd in the World, and that Ri-

chēs alone are the Causes of it, that those who are Mean in the World can have no Reputation, but are buried in Obscurity. That Poverty is Infamous, and despised by all, and that it is a Punishment inflicted upon the worst and most undeserving part of Mankind. Thus we flatter our selves to our own Ruine, and blind our Reason to gratify our Passions. I don't say but a Good Man may have interest in the Prosperities and Blessings of this Life, and use them with Innocence. Since 'tis not the Things themselves but the Abuse of them, that
is

is Unlawful. *A Good Man* says Seneca, does not contemn Temporal Blessings, so as to drive them away, but if they come they are welcome, if not he'll never break his Heart for the want of them. He takes them into his House, not into his Soul, and makes use of them, only as a Matter for his Vertue to work upon. There is no doubt, but he may shew himself better in Riches than in Poverty, that is to say his Temperance, his Liberality, his Magnificence, Providence and Prudence will be then more Conspicuous.

Riches are indeed in some measure subservient

to a Man's Well-being in this World ; yet as the Enjoyment of them , can't make us Happy, because uncertain and insecure, so neither can the Want of them make those Unhappy, however they may appear to Others , whose Desires and Ambition never soar'd after them, but who contained themselves within those Limits which Providence had set them. That a moderate desire of the Necessaries and Comforts of Life is not only Lawful but Commendable, I do suppose it universally granted, but then we must take care that we make them

them only as *Instruments* and helps to Happiness, but not Happiness it self: and that they be as *Companions* to us, but not *Guides* in our way to Happiness. There is this difference in Riches, that they are the Servants of Good Men, whereas they are the Masters of the Bad, and of those who set their Minds upon them. *From the One*, says *Seneca*, if they depart they carry away nothing but themselves, but from the *Other*, they take away the very Heart and Peace of the Possessor along with them. It is true that if I might have my Choice, I would have
 Health

Health and Strength, and yet if I come to be visited with Pain or Sickneſs, I will endeavour to improve them to my Advantage by making a Righteous Judgement of them; as I ought to do of all the Appointments of *Providence*. So that as they are not Good in themſelves, neither are they Evil; but matter of Exerciſe for our Virtues; of *Temperance*, on the One hand, and of *Reſignation*, on the Other.

Thoſe who make Riches their utmoſt care and concern, find Diſappointments in that kind very inſupportable to them. For whatſo-
ever

ever Opinion a Man has of Happiness, and whatever he places it in, if he chance to fall short of it, whilst he continues in that Opinion, he must unavoidably be Miserable. And therefore those who extend their Hopes and Desires to things out of their own Power, and fix their Happiness upon them, cannot possibly avoid being so, because they must frequently miss of their Desires, may be always disappointed in their Hopes, and be often overtaken by their Fears: Thus the *Ambitious* and *Covetous*, flatter themselves with Hopes, which they
can

can never attain to; their Desires encrease with their Honours and Riches, and after all, Dissatisfaction and Discontent prove to be the chief of their Enjoyment.

All the Happiness that this World can promise, is only to be purchas'd with a great deal of Pains and Labour, is possess'd with continual Cares and Fears, and ends in Troubles and *Vexation of Spirit*. Even the Voluptuous Libertines who make Pleasure their only Happiness, find a great mixture of Uneasiness and Discontent always attending on it; either things do not fall

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fall out according to their Wish, or else the Enjoyment cannot satisfy them ; they either grow weary of-it, or it ends before they would have it ; all which is matter of Dissatisfaction to them.

But besides all this, that *Anguish of Mind*, that *Horror* and *Remorse of Conscience*, which the Thoughts upon our mis-spent time, bring upon us, imbitters all our Pleasures, and makes Life it self only a Burthen to us. A Reflection upon our past time, though it has been spent never so pleasantly, though every minute of it has been entertained
with

with the most delightful Gratifications of the Senses, if at last the Mind be dissatisfied, will be so far from giving us any Pleasure or Contentment, that it will only serve to enhaunce our Misery. And though we had formerly perswaded our selves to a Compliance with the Modes and Humours of the Age, in some unlawful Practices, that we might not be thought Morose and Uncivil, yet those false Pretences will then appear very insufficient to support us under the Terrors and Apprehensions of a troubled Mind.

I should now come to consider the Miseries and Infirmities of *Old Age*. But these are so manifestly Great, so universally Acknowledg'd, and fall so commonly under every One's Observation, that a Description of them, would be only superfluous and unnecessary. If to be Infirm, Feeble, and Helpless, to be always in Wants, and yet unable to administer to their own Necessities, if to labour under a continual Conflux of Distempers, without any prospect of Cure, if to be always in Pain, without any hopes of Remedy, is to be
Un-

Unhappy, then certainly these Men above all Others, must be confest to be so. Yet they have this Advantage, above any other part of Man's Life to comfort themselves with, that being Free and at Liberty, from the noise and hurry of Business, and no way distracted with the tumultuous and troublesome Cares of Life, their Minds are more at leisure to enjoy themselves with the happy Contemplations of their *Future State*. The Pleasures of the Body, are no longer a Snare to them, and like Men depriv'd of Sight, who have their
Un-

Understanding more strong and vigorous, by abstracting it from the Objects of Sense, their Souls are no longer in Danger, of being drawn away to the Gratification of the Sensual Appetite. They have a clearer, and more perspicuous Knowledge of Things, and their long Experience of the World, has taught them to prize every thing according to its *Just Estimate*. There is no Age, says Seneca, better adapted to Vertue, than that, which comes by many Experiences, and Long-sufferings to the knowledge of it, for our Lusts are then weak, and our
Judg-

Judgment strong, and Wisdom is the Effect of Time.

They have learnt that to know themselves is the best Philosophy, and that an Intimate Acquaintance with their own Souls, is the truest Happiness : and as they have a nearer View of another Life, so are they more ravish'd with the Prospect of it, and their Hopes and Expectations grow more lively and affecting.

It must be confess'd that where these Supports of a good Conscience are wanting, there Men are more Miserable in this Age, than in all others ; for in other
parts

parts of man's Life, the Fear of Punishment is not so prevalent, because it seems at a greater distance, and therefore does not so much disturb and torment the mind in its Sensual Enjoyment, with the thoughts of it; but here the Soul is in continual Anguish, the Body shaking and tottering, ready every minute to crumble into Dust, the Soul amazed stands upon a dreadful Precipice, fearing the next moment to sink into the Bottomless Hell. Now every Reflection that a Bad man makes is only a new Addition to his misery, and every
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serious Thought, is only a fresh Torment to him. All the Outward Pleasures, which he promised himself Support from, begin to fail him, and he has no Comfort within to flee to. If he looks backward, he can find nothing that can give him *Satisfaction*, and if forward, nothing but *Despair*. All that he can expect is either to be for ever miserable, or to become *nothing*. The Fear of the One perswades him to hope for the Other: not that he can convince himself by reason to believe it, but only that he has Reason enough to wish it
might

might be so. For a Prospect of Misery will put a Man upon a thousand Shifts and Evasions whereby to escape it, and he is apt to take up with the least shadow or appearance of Reason, if he can thereby obtain any Interval of Ease. For the Extremity of *Fear*, as of all other Passions, puts the Soul into such Disorder and Confusion, that it endeavours by all means to be releas'd from the Torments of it; and if it can procure one minute of Ease, it takes not time to consider the Reasonableness of the means and measures that obtain'd it.

But

But let us suppose a Man had some Rational grounds to believe, that hereafter he should not *Be*; yet that Belief could be no real Satisfaction to him; For if he placed his Pleasures in the things of Sense, and the Enjoyments of them, and if every Reflection upon them was pleasing to him, it must necessarily follow, that the Thoughts and Fears of being depriv'd of them must be very uneasy to him. For 'tis natural for us to Grieve at the loss of what we love, or if we are separated from what we Admire. But if a Man takes no satisfaction
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in the things of Life, and is grown weary of them, the Hopes of *Annihilation* can be no great Pleasure to him, because they are *Out-balanced* by the Miseries of Life. For if they were not, he would endeavour to live long in the Enjoyment of a Hope and Expectation, which after Death he can no longer be sensible of.

It is certainly more Desirable not to be at all, than to be for ever Miserable; but 'tis *Rational* also to ground my Belief of what shall be hereafter, upon the most solid and certain Reasons, to consider which is

D most

most likely to be true, and which side its most dangerous to Err on, and to take care, lest Passion, Prejudice or Interest, should mislead or deceive me with a naked *Appearance* instead of Truth.

As the Thoughts upon what is past and to come, are the Causes of Misery to the Bad; so do they bring great Pleasure and Satisfaction to the Good. Their Expectation of Happiness to come bears them up under all Afflictions here, and a *Reflection* on their former Life, gives them a full assurance, that their Expecta-
tion

tion is firm and certain. Tho' they have Imperfections to grieve at, and many Troubles to encounter with, yet they are fully perswaded, that their Imperfect State here, will be advanced to a full Completion of Happiness hereafter.

Had a good Man nothing to expect beyond the Grave, his Condition would be certainly most Miserable. Not but that there are more Pleasures, and more lasting Satisfaction in the Practice of Vertue, than that of Vice: yet as they are greater, so the Thoughts of being for ever deprived of them,

D 2 would

would be more insupportable. The Imperfect State that we are now in, shews that our Nature desires something more compleat. And as a Good Man, who gives himself more Liberty in the free Exercise of his Reason, and conversing with the Nature of Things, finds, that Vertue considering the unavoidable Imperfections, Hindrances, and Infirmities that Life is ensnared with, can never be here compleatly perfect, and consequently not its own *Reward*, so should he be convinced, that he should be frustrated of those Desires
he

he finds in his Soul to Immortality, the Remainder of his Life would be uncomfortable, and the Pleasures of Vertue altogether unsatisfactory. Had I no other Reasons to convince me, that I shall Exist hereafter (as I think I have innumerable) yet that very *Antipathy* which I find in my self to become Nothing, seems to me a convincing Argument, and gives me sufficient Assurance, that I shall never fall into it.

But I shall pass on from this Digression to consider some other Causes of Grief, which every Age of Man

that can make use of its Faculty of Reason, is particularly concerned in. And in which the more Thinking part of Mankind, have always acknowledged as such. And these are the loss of a Man's Reputation, or the loss of Friends. These of all other Afflictions (except that of a wounded Conscience) fall most heavy upon us, and make the deepest Impressions upon our Minds.

Every Man has a Natural Love for himself, and a Desire to be spoken well of by Others. A good Name, and a fair Reputation not
only

only make a Man's Life pleasant in the World, but are also so far necessary to our Converse here, that whoever seems careless or prodigal of them, justly forfeits his Pretensions either to Honour or Humanity. When a Man has once lost his Credit, he is no longer fit for *Society*, he is shun'd and avoided by all, as tho' his very Company was Infectious. Hence it is that those who are not ashamed to do an Ill *Action*, are yet unwilling it should be made Publick, lest it should blast their Reputation, which they are generally more

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concerned for, than the viciousness of the Action. For though they inwardly hate the Practice of Vertue, yet they are asham'd the World should be made acquainted with it.

That Good Men may fall under ill Reports is too evident, and the World has had too frequent Experiences of the truth of it ; which is more to be lamented than wonder'd at, since there is so much envy and malice amongst Men. Ill Nature will always be finding Faults, and where there are none, will take an opportunity to make them ; and
'tis

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'tis hard if there are not those who are Ill-natur'd enough to believe them. But though the slanders and reproaches of the Envious and Malicious, can never make a Good man miserable, yet 'tis certain they are a great abatement to his Happiness. As if Providence had permitted them on purpose, to shew us how insecure and slippery our best Foundations are here, as also to teach us *Humility*, lest we should be too much in love with Life, and set too high a Value upon our *Selves*, and our present Enjoyments.

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I come now to consider another great Cause of our Misery and Sorrow, the *Loss of Friends*. This of all Others falls heavy upon us, and is so much the greater, because for ever Irrecoverable. All other Losses, as of Health, Reputation, Honours, Riches, or the like, may either by Prudence or Diligence, be in some measure repair'd, but this alone can never more be restor'd to us. This is that Separation, which makes this State so uneasy and burdensome to us, because it deprives us of the truest Satisfaction, and Relish of Life. Nature
has

has made us Sociable Creatures, and all our Study and Endeavours, are designed to qualify us for that End. And this we are above all things delighted with, because most agreeable to us.

But though our Love of *Society* is natural to us, yet the choice of our Particular *Company*, is an Act of Prudence ; For Friendship is not to be number'd amongst the Goods of Chance and Fortune, but amongst those of Vertue. This is the most charming of all our Delights, and which we are most fond of, and for whose Sake, we are willing to under-

dergo all the other Troubles and Miseries of Life. *The Enjoyment of this great Blessing*, says Seneca, *sweetens all our Cares; dispels our Sorrows, counsels us in all Extremities, and is a sovereign Antidote against all the Calamities of Life.* It gives Comfort to bear us up in all Adversities, and supplies us with Joy and Happiness, in the midst of the greatest Afflictions; and so long as we can preserve the Enjoyment of it, whatever else may befall us, we are sure never to be Miserable.

But notwithstanding the great Benefit and Advantage

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tage of this *Blessing* to Mankind, yet it has this Imperfection in it, that it is uncertain; there is no security against the *Loss* of it. 'Tis this we in vain lament, and continually *Grieve* at, tho' we know our *Grief* can give us no *Remedy*. *Friendship* is so much the Interest of mankind, that not to be sensible at the *Loss* of it, is either to be more or less than Men. There are but few that are so much raised above the Sense of this Calamity, as not to be affected with it. For it is one of the greatest Tryals of our Nature, and has need of the
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utmost Efforts of Vertue,
patiently to undergo it.
Notwithstanding all our
care and caution, our strong-
est and most vigorous Re-
solutions prove too weak to
withstand it. And we find
it an easier matter at a di-
stance to reason about it,
than to act Prudently when
we come to the Tryal. And
though we frequently ima-
gine, we make vigorous
Preparations against it, yet
when it falls upon us, it com-
monly finds us Defenseless
and Unarm'd. We can ne-
ver so far conquer our Love
of Happiness here, as to be
separated from the Dearest
part

part of it, without any Concern or Reluctancy. Nature so far prevails in us, notwithstanding the severest Dictates of the most exalted Reason, that as it can't possess its Enjoyments without a great deal of Satisfaction, so neither can it bear the Losses of them, without the greatest Regret, and the most passionate Expressions of *Sorrow*. And if it falls not into Excess, I suppose there is none so much a *Stoick* as to condemn it.

But the Loss of Friends is still more affecting, when we had almost promised ourselves a lasting Enjoyment
of

of them : when the Health and Vigour of a Constitution, joyn'd with a sweet and obliging Temper, an affable and courteous Behaviour, a concern and tenderness for the Good of Others, an earnest study and endeavour to promote the Publick Happiness and Tranquillity of Mankind, mixt with the most endearing Charms of Conversation, gave us large Hopes of such a Happiness, as might withstand all the Designs of Malice and Envy, and overcome, if possible, all the Uncertainties of Chance and Fortune. Such a Loss, does certainly deserve our greatest

greatest Sense of it, challenges the utmost Bounds of true Sorrow ; and if any thing can, may excuse, at least in some measure palliate the Excess of it. But although even this may never justify such immoderate Grief, which abstracts the Mind, as well from the Duties of Humanity, as those of Religion, yet it may serve to Convince us, how Vain a thing it is to put our Trust and Confidence in Man, whose Days are few and uncertain, and therefore to be but little accounted of.

Thus we see every Part, and Condition of Life, leads

us

us only to a new Scene of Miseries. Our first Entrance into Life is miserable, and the longer Experience we have of the World, the more Calamities we have still to complain of. We begin with Tears and Sorrows, and can never get secure of them, till Death comes at last and pays the *Ransom* for us. There is no space of time that we enjoy, with so much Freedom and Satisfaction as to pronounce our selves truly *Happy*. We have always something or other either to fear or hope for. We desire what we have not, and are afraid, lest what we are
pos-

possest of, should be snatcht away from us.

Though we know, that true or false Notions of Things, and the regulating of our Desires, and all our other Passions, are in a great measure in our own Power, yet we often deceive our selves, and suffer our Irregular Appetites, to draw us aside against the clearest Convictions of Reason. There are few of us, that can be perswaded to forego an Enjoyment, which we find no present Trouble or Inconvenience from, though at the same time we are convinc'd, that 'tis a Crime
in

in us to indulge it, and that hereafter we shall be rewarded with a severe Punishment, suitable to our Demerit.

If Nature has subjected us to many Troubles and Vexations, we instead of redressing them, add innumerable Others to them. We live inconsiderately, and as we are thoughtless of the lesser Misfortunes and miseries of Life, so are we unprovided for the Greater, whereby it happens that they overwhelm us, and we frequently sink under the weight of them.

There

There are several other Causes of our *Grief* and Disturbance, which every Day's Experience gives us fresh Instances of, but I have not time to take notice of them. These which I have mentioned, as I think they are the most Notorious, so they may serve to convince us in general of the Necessity of looking higher for Help and Support under them. And may also be of use to inform us, what a poor indigent Creature Man is, and how much he wants of finding Happiness, while he expects it from himself, or the Things of this Life.

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Was Happiness to be obtain'd here, certainly after all the Searches that have been made after it, some One or other would possibly have found it : But at last, all ends in this, *Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity. What Profit hath a Man of all his Labour, which he taketh under the Sun. Verily Man walketh in a vain Shadow and disquieteth himself in vain.*

But though these Afflictions which I have mentioned be common to All, yet are they terrible to None, but such as depend upon this Life for their Happiness. Hence it will appear that

that our false *Opinions* of Things, and not the Things themselves, are the Real Causes of our Misfortunes. Nothing is uncertain and unconstant to him that is prepar'd against it ; Nor does any thing come unexpected to him that is provided for it. He that is settled and unconcerned at the smiles or frowns of Fortune, can never meet with Disappointments. For he that makes use of those Assistances, which the Great Author of Nature has provided us with, whereby to mitigate, if not wholly to subdue the force of Afflictions, can
never

never be wholly overcome
by them. *Though Man, as*
Tull. Fragmen.
De Rep.
(Tully observes)

*comes into the
World with a Body naked,
Frail, and Infirm, with a Mind
subject to Cares and Troubles,
dejected by Fears, impatient
of Labour, and prone to Lust;
yet there is a Divine Flame
of Wit and Understanding,
which lies as it were Obscure,
and overwhelm'd, which with
due Care and Diligence may
be so improv'd as to fortify
us against Troubles, to prevent
our Fears, and subdue our ir-
regular Appetites and rebel-
lions Passions. Had we no
Misfortunes to grapple with,*

no Lusts or Passions to conquer, we should have so little use of the Exercise of Vertue and Reason, that they would hardly have so much as a Name amongst us. But how far and by what methods, we may both prevent our Miseries and remedy our Grievs, will be now my Business to consider.

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O F
The REMEDY of
G R I E F.

FReedom from Pain or Trouble is a Happiness we all aim at, but are most of us mistaken in our Search after it. We are apt to be so much concerned for what is present, as to neglect making Provision for Futurity. Could we give our selves time to consider the extent and reason of Things, we should

should find little cause to be excessive in our *Enjoyments*, or cast down with our *Misfortunes*, to be elevated with our *Hopes* or distracted by our *Fears*.

Nature that has endued us with *Passions*, has also provided us with sufficient Power to Regulate them. And though there are so many different Objects which are apt to hurry us away, and bias our Inclinations, yet we have a Judgment given us to distinguish between the Good and the Bad, to fix in our Minds true notions of Things, and apply them to those proper

Uses to which they were design'd.

Man is a Compound of *Body* and *Mind*, which have each a different Interest to manage, and accordingly as either prevails, so the whole Bent of our Passions and Inclinations turns: were we either all *Sense* or all *Reason*, we should have nothing to mislead us, but should go on, in a direct Tendency to whatsoever was most suitable to our Nature. The one would want Judgment, to know or value any Pleasure above that of *Sense*; and the other could not conform it self to any Enjoyments
be-

below those of the *Mind*,
and the clear Knowledge of
its own Perfections. This
is most like the Life of An-
gels, who have only Spiri-
tual Conversation to be de-
lighted with ; the Other,
that of Brutes, who can ne-
ver raise themselves beyond
the Apprehensions of their
Sensitive Nature. Which of
these we ought to follow,
either the Dictates of *Sense*
or *Reason*, I should think,
had we no Prejudices that
obscure our Understandings,
would be no difficult matter
to decide. If a far nobler
Being deserves the Prefer-
ence to a more Abject

and Ignoble, then must also, the essential Difference of them be placed in the same Degree of Superiority. But we are generally too much engag'd in the things of Sense, to be at leisure to pass a true Judgment upon them, and thereupon are inclin'd to believe that their Enjoyments are Real, and agreeable to the Dictates of Reason.

And thus we deceive ourselves, till some cross Accidents or Misfortunes, some Bodily Torment or Indisposition, gives us another notion of Things, and renders all those Pleasures nauseous

scious and distastful to us, which we before thought the only true *Happiness* of Life.

And this I think it is, which discovers to us a sufficient difference between *Good* and *Evil*; that the Pleasure and Satisfaction arising from the one, is durable and certain, not to be changed by the inconstancy of Fortune, or impairments of Health and Constitution; whereas the other can be no longer Enjoy'd, or so much as reflected upon with Comfort, then the Body and the sensible Appetite is qualify'd and rightly disposed.

Was there no real Distinction between what we call *Vertue* and *Vice*, in the foundation of Things, why should the Reflection upon the One, when we can no longer satisfy our selves with the Delights of it, cause such Remorse, Terror, and Distraction within us, and the Other entertain us with such infinite Pleasure, whatsoever State of Life we happen to fall into. Were all Actions the same, and deriv'd their *Nature* only from the *Opinions* of Men, why did it never happen that some Person or other should have repented of a Good Action

ACTION as well as of a Bad one? For the Reason would be the same, since some Men's Opinions only of *Good* and *Evil*, could never produce such violent Effects in the Minds of Others, especially of those who Profess to believe the Contrary.

But to come nearer: 'tis Afflictions alone which discover to us, the Essential difference, between the Impressions of *Fancy*, and those of *Reason*. These set things before us in their true Light; and dispel those mists from our Eyes, which long Prejudice and Unthoughtfulness,

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had unhappily rais'd before them. It is by this means we come to know and confess, that the Pleasures of Sense can only satisfy the Sense, and that the Mind hath no share in them. For if it had, instead of being dissatisfied, it would please and divert the Body with the thoughts of them, and when the Body is disabled, it would relieve it with a grateful Remembrance of its past Enjoyments.

We find in our selves Reason to thank *G O D* for the *Afflictions* as well as the *Comforts of Life* : when by these we are apt to forget
our

our selves, and the Relation we bear to another Life, and to fancy our selves already as Happy as Heaven it self can make us, and unexpected Affliction deprives us of our Imaginary Happiness, and instead of that, reduces us to the use of Reason, makes us know our selves, and consider the End and Design of our Being. The more we are oppress'd with the Calamities and Troubles of this Life the more we are taught to prize and seek after the serene and undisturbed Joys of another.

For if we look into the Soul, and observe the springs
of

of its Motions, we shall find, that Afflictions are generally the first occasion of Mens conquering their Inclinations, of ennobling their Minds, of raising them to a due contempt of the Enjoyments of Sense, and of keeping Humane Nature, with all its Desires, within the bounds of Reason and Ver-
rue.

We are generally apt to think *Afflictions* the greatest Misery that could happen to us. Yet did we consider the Uses we ought to make of them, and apply our selves to that End, we should at last find cause to acknowledge

ledge the Goodness of *Providence* therein to us. And though they fall sometimes very severe upon us, yet thereby we may be taught to live more Considerately, and better provide ourselves against them, for the time to come. Did we leave all our Concerns to *Providence*, and were contented to submit our selves to all its Dispensations, we should find few *Afflictions* threatening us, but which we might easily overcome. But we are so very fond of our present Ease, that we are unwilling to be at any trouble in providing against a future Evil:
And

And are generally so careless, that we never regard a Misery that's coming upon us, till 'tis too late to apply a Remedy. We are willing to be Happy, but yet would be at no Pains and Trouble, whereby to make our selves so.

We seldom think of *Afflictions* till we are oppress'd by them, and then we are not able to resist the Weight of them. If this be our case, when unprovided against the Calamities of this Life, it well deserves our utmost Care and Diligence, since we can't prevent them, to try by what means we may make them

On G R I E F. 111

them most easy and useful to us, that in the End, we may grow both wiser and better by them.

In order therefore to the Remediying our *Griefs*, and the supporting our selves under all *Afflictions*, it will be necessary for us in the first place to consider the Nature of those things which we generally make the Causes of our Sorrow. In the next place, to fix in our Minds true Notions of Religion. And lastly it will be our Duty to consider, what Dangers we expose our selves to, if we indulge our Sorrow, and take no care to correct the

the Abuses of it. If we try these Expedients, we shall never be wanting in our Duty either to *G O D* or our selves; but shall make our Lives *Comfortable* and *Pleasant* as well as *Religious*.

First of all then, for the *fixing in our Minds the true Notions and Nature of those things which we have a concern for*, whereby to guide our selves by the Rules of Wisdom and Prudence, and to keep our Judgments steady and inflexible, so as not to be drawn aside by the Violence of our corrupt Affections, it will be necessary to consider whether they are *Certain, Durable*

erable and Constant, or of a perishing Nature, and short Continuance ; what Relation it is that they bear to us, whether they are such as we can call our Own, or at the disposal of Others, and such as we may at any time be deprived of. As also, what is the Use and End of them. Whether they were given us to be our only Happiness, or lent us upon Conditions, to see what Improvements we could make of them. And then it will be our wisest way to value or esteem them accordingly ; and set that price upon them, which we find the Na-

Nature of them deserves.

Reason was given us for this End, to form our Judgments aright, and so far to direct us in our way to Happiness, that we may not make that the Object of it, w^{ch} is altogether Insufficient for it; that we may not be deceiv'd with Shadows, nor mistaken in those things which are of greatest *Importance* to us. We can easily pardon and pass by an Error in a small matter both in our selves and Others; but we ought to be very Careful and Cautious how we fall into mistakes where the Consequence is dangerous,
and

On G R I E F. 115

and when our Peace or Mi-
sery depends upon it.

When we act most Ra-
tionally, we generally va-
lue Things according to the
Duration and Continuance
of them, as well as to the
Propriety we have in them.
What is not our own, though
we may admire it, yet we
can't doat upon it, nor be
much concerned what be-
comes of it, because we bear
no Relation to it: nor are
we very Sollicitous about
any thing that we our selves
cannot Enjoy. And though
it be something that we
have a Right to, and which
we may Enjoy, yet if we
are

are sure, that it will be only for a very short inconsiderable time, it is little more Satisfaction to us, than the not Enjoying it at all, since we cannot enjoy it always. Hence we may gather what uncertain things all Worldly Enjoyments are, and how little there is here Below, that we can call our Own; as also what Value to set upon things which we have no certain or lasting Right to, and how unbecoming it is to a Rational Being *to contract an Eternal Passion*, for what can endure but a moment. Since he can't avoid being Miserable that fixes his

his Happiness on what is not lasting : And it is plain, that since we are not to Live here always, that no present Enjoyment can be an Essential Happiness to us, which as soon as we have tasted, we are snatched from, or that from us.

Did we but consider that the best of our outward Enjoyments are not at the disposal of our own Wills, and that they are such as we could promise our selves but a short Possession of, and that too very uncertain, it would abate our Care and Fondness of them ; It would teach us to make them so far

far our Happpiness, as not
to be unhappy or miserable
at our being dispossess'd of
them. This would lessen
our *Fears*, encrease our *Cou-*
rage, and put us upon the
Practice of those Vertues
which we have most need
of, and in which we are ge-
nerally most defective, *Pa-*
tience and *Contentment* of
Mind.

But this like all other
Duties of *Religion*, is not a
Work to be done on a sud-
den, but requires great pre-
paration and fix'dness of
Mind, strict Attention of
Thought, constant Reflecti-
ons on Humane Nature, and
daily

not daily Observations on the
 rable uncertainty and instability
 ft of of Things. And it is better
 essen done before we are exercised
 Cou- with Afflictions, than defer-
 n the red till we come to the Try-
 rtues al. This will look like a *Ne-*
 need cessity, the other a *Vertue*.
 e ge- Besides, that will be a very
 , Pa- unfit time for us to begin so
 nt of necessary a Duty. It is like
 other delaying Repentance to the
 not a last *Hour*, when the sense of
 sud- our Guilt, and the misery of
 t pre- our Condition, not the love
 ss of of Vertue or Religion,
 on of makes us cry out for *Mercy*,
 flecti- though it can give us but
 e, and small hopes of *Pardon*.
 daily

The

The Distempers of the Mind, as those of the Body ; are better prevented than cur'd. As Temperance is the best Physick, and preservative of the Body ; so a calm and serene Temper of the Mind, a moderation towards all external Things, keeps us even and free from Prejudice, and gives us leisure to judge rightly of the Nature of them, whereby we are able to make ourselves easy under every Accident that may happen, and amidst all the Varieties of Fortune, which may either flatter us on the one Hand, or threaten us on the Other.

'Tis

'Tis our false Opinions of Things that plunge us into most of our Troubles and Disorders; if we have Prudence enough to rectify these, and settle our Judgments as well as Desires, upon what is truly Good, we shall be so well prepar'd against all Events, and so well fortified against all the Miseries and Calamities of Life, that they will never be able either to disturb our Peace, or dispossess our Reason.

But we shall find this further Advantage by considering the Insufficiency of all things here for our Happiness,

ness, that it will necessarily lead us to that which is alone sufficient for it : If we find Imperfections in our selves, we must conclude that there is something Perfect ; because a Sence of the First necessarily infers a Belief of the Latter. For we can't know that we want any thing, but by comparing our selves with that which has whatsoever we are defective in; and this by a necessary Train of Consequences directs us to Him, who is Perfection it self, and out of whose immense and inexhausted Treasure, all our Wants and Necessities can

can alone be supplied.

But again, if we form in our Minds certain and firm *Judgments* of Things, according to the essential Good or Evil of them, we shall direct all the Actions of Life according to them. By this means we shall keep our Minds peaceable and temperate, and prevent the disorders of our Passions and *Affections*; whatever it is that we love or hate, we shall presently consider the Reasons that engage our Affections to it. If we find that 'tis Mortal and Uncertain, we shall fix our Minds upon it, as a thing we know we

can enjoy but a short time ;
and therefore if we should
be depriv'd of it, it will be
no more than what we were
always in expectation of,
and what we were prepar'd
for. If we are reduc'd to
Poverty, our Condition of
Mind will be still the same.
We know that *Riches make
themselves Wings and fly a-
way* : And therefore as the
Great Emperour *Antoninus*
observes of *Socrates* ; We
Shall know how to want and
enjoy those things, in the want
whereof other Men, such as
the unsetled and unthinking
shew themselves Weak, as well
as Intemperate in the Fruition.

Un-

Until I have fixt in my Mind some *Principle* to act by, I shall only live at Random, frustrated by a Thousand Uncertainties, always at a loss in my Expectations, deluded with Shadows, lost in Errors, Uncertain either what to *hope* for, or what to *fear*, yet continually distracted and hurried on by the Extreames of *Both*. My Actions will never be directed to any wise or prudent *End*; and if Good results from them, it must be imputed to Time and Chance, and not to the Rules and Conduct of *Prudence*. There can be no Vertue, unless our Actions

proceed from *Choice* and *Deliberation*. I may give all my *Goods to Feed the Poor*, but unless I give them with a Religious Design, out of a pure Principle of satisfying their Necessities, and doing Good by it, I can't call it *Charity*: For if I am naturally Pitiful and Compassionate, I may give to gratify my Inclinations, without thinking or proposing any other End by it, and then it is not so properly *Charity*, as *Good-nature* in me.

In short, Our chief Business is to form in our selves true and certain Notions of Happiness and Tranquillity
of

of Mind, what way it is that leads to them, and then to determine our selves to the Attainment of them. We are first to know, and then to practice; and tho' both our Knowledge and Acquisition of Happiness here, are but very imperfect, compared with that which will hereafter be revealed to us, yet they will be sufficient to disperse all our *Griefs*, to arm us against Afflictions, and prevent our sinking under the Weight of them.

To propose the quiet and serenity of our Minds, as the end of all our Actions, is to make a great Progress

in our way to Happiness:
And will give us sure Hopes
of resisting all Temptations
that may hinder us, or give
us any stop in our Search af-
ter it: And to this purpose
we ought frequently to
make a strict Enquiry into
our Condition, whether we
are in the direct way that
leads to it: And then it will
be necessary to take so far a
view of our selves, as to ex-
amine, whether we are not
under any mistakes, either
in our Notions, or in the
pursuit of them. For a mi-
stake or ignorance in either,
will one time or other una-
voidably make us Unhappy.
And

And here it may be expected, that I should shew wherein consists that *Peace* and *Tranquillity* of *Mind*, that we may be neither deceiv'd in our Notions about it, nor miscarry in our Endeavours after it.

To obviate all Objections, that may arise from hence, it may be sufficient to answer in general, That *Peace* and *Satisfaction* of *Mind* depends not upon any of the external Enjoyments of Life for its Happiness; nor is it liable to be depriv'd of it, by any Accidents or Misfortunes. Its Happiness is within its self, and whatsoever

happens from without can neither really add to it, nor detract from it; its neither sollicitous nor careless about the things of Sense; 'tis moderate in its Desires, neither tormented with Fears, nor impatient in its Hopes, neither anxious about Life, nor afraid of Death. Its Actions are always one and the same; and the Great measure of them is *Conscience*, as it is rightly inform'd by the Precepts of true Religion. In a word, Peace of *Mind* is that, which prudently and chearfully performs whatever *God* commands, and patiently bears whatever Punish-

ishments he inflicts. And has also this great Perfection to perswade our Search after it, that when we can once Attain it, 'tis our Own for Ever.

And this leads me to consider in the next place, what are the most proper Methods we can make use of, to obtain this *Peace and Calmness of Mind*, which may support and comfort us under all *Afflictions*.

And this is what I observed in the Second place, the *fixing in our Minds a true Sence of Religion*, joined with a sincere Endeavour of living up to all the Precepts of it.

it. The main Design of Religion is, to enlarge our Understandings, to rectify our Wills, to subdue our Lusts and irregular Passions, and to wean our Thoughts from this World, by proposing the *Eternal* Happiness of the Next: that is, It teaches us *to walk by Faith and not by Sense*: To forego all these short and imperfect Pleasures, for those perfect and endless Joys, which all they shall have a full Possession of, *who by patient Continuance in Well-doing seek for Glory, Honour and Immortality*. It endeavours to work upon our Understanding, by convincing-

vincing us, of the Unreasonableness of being too much concern'd at any thing that may befall us here, since these *Afflictions which are but for a Moment*, if we make a good use of them, *will work out for us a far more exceeding and Eternal Weight of Glory*. It shows us, that what we here call Felicity, is not able to satisfy us, and therefore perswades and invites us to set our Affections upon that immense and everlasting Good, where we shall have nothing more to desire than what we enjoy; or nothing to add to our Happiness, because it will be perfect.

For

For true Happiness is that, which when we are once possess'd of, there can be nothing left us to Desire, because that alone is able to satisfy us: For He that desires any thing above all Others, will make all other things subordinate to this His chief Happiness; and if he can be secure in his Enjoyment of that, whatever may befall him, 'tis impossible he should be miserable. If we could therefore make *God* our chief Happiness, and resolve our Actions into a Conformity to His Will, we may be said to be properly as Happy, as this State can be

On G R I E F. 135

be capable of: And though hereafter we shall receive large Additions to it, yet it will be the same Happiness, continued to us in a more full Enjoyment of the chief Good, which could not so clearly manifest it self to us under this Veil of Flesh, which in a great measure intercepts that glorious Appearance.

But besides, *Religion* is not only our greatest Comfort and Support under *Afflictions*, by laying before us the Rewards of the next Life, but also the Happiness of this; it hath the *Promise of this Life, as well as that which*

which is to come. Whatever State we are in, it gives us Peace and Ease under it ; it makes every Condition happy , because it brings *Patience* and *Contentment* along with it : It makes us Enjoy that we have, and keeps us from Craving what we have not ; in a word, *Godliness with Contentment is great gain.*

How much better is it for us, had we no Prospect of another Life, to live at Ease and free from Troubles in this, than to be continually vexing and tormenting our selves at every cross *Accident* that may befall us, and make our Condition, *miserable*

able enough in it self, still more miserable, by an Addition of new and unnecessary *Sorrows* and *Troubles*. The Best of the Heathens, though they had very uncertain and obscure Notions of another *Life*, and were ignorant of the Rewards, proposed to the Observance of *God's Commandments*, yet in their Writings forbid the indulging our *Sorrows*, upon a Principle of Peace and Quiet in this Life, and from the Incongruity they found in them to the Actions of right Reason, and to that *Order, Grace* and *Constancy*, that *Greatness* and *Majesty*, which

which ought to be observed in the exact Practice of *Vertue*. How much more ought we, who have larger Degrees of Knowledge, and more sublime Rules to guide our Lives by, to be constant and watchful in the Duties of that Religion, in the keeping of which *there is great Reward*: In this World, true Peace and Tranquillity of Mind, and in *the World to come Eternal Life*.

But of all the great Branches of *Religion*, there is none more necessary, for the governing of our Lives, and the supporting our weak Nature under all *Afflictions*,
than

than these Two: First, *The belief and acknowledgment of a Providence*; And Secondly, *The Immortality of the Soul*.

As to the First, The Belief of a *Providence* is the main Foundation of all Religion: And is not only the greatest Encouragement, to a Holy Life, but is also the true Source and Principle of all our Happiness and Comfort in this World. That this Universe is governed by Almighty Wisdom and Power, that all things here are under the especial Care of infinite Goodness and Mercy, that they are at the immediate Disposal and Order of
an

an Omnipotent Being, and that Chance and Fortune have no management of any of our Affairs, is the greatest Blessing and Happiness of Mankind. What an unspeakable Satisfaction must it be to the Minds of Good Men, to think that *Providence* is alway watching over them, and that the Malice of the most Wicked Men, can never do them the least Injury, without God's order or permission. It is a noble Saying of the Great Heathen Emperor, *M. Aurelius*, *That if there were no GOD to take Care of Humane Affairs, He would not desire to Live*

On G R I E F. 141

Live any longer in the World.
All the Enjoyments of this World would be very unpleasant, as well as uncertain, if that Harmony which is now observ'd in all the Divine Acts of Providence, were chang'd into Confusion, and Man, now the most exalted of all sublunary Beings, would become the most helpless and unhappy of all the Creatures.

Troubles and Calamities are unavoidable, and therefore we must expect them. For *Man is born to Trouble as the Sparks fly upward*; and therefore it is necessary that we should seek out for some Support under them, and depend

pend upon something, that may be at all times a Comfort to us. Now Comfort is nothing else, but the repelling an *Evil* that disturbs us, by the Help and Mediation of what we account a *Good*. And the greater the Evil is that oppresses us, so is it necessary that the Good we depend upon for Relief, should be able to deliver us from it. But that nothing is able to do this but the *Chief Good*, is evident because nothing besides is sufficient for our Happiness: Therefore it appears that it is GOD alone that we ought to depend upon for Succour in all
our

On G R I E F. 143

our Adversities, who both
can and will deliver us, and
be our Consolation and Sup-
port, amidst all the Adversiti-
ties of Life, and the Terrors
and Pangs of Death. We
are His Creatures, whom
He made, not so much to
shew His Power, as His
Goodness; and whom He
form'd out of the Dust on-
ly to advance to Happi-
ness. Every Day's Experi-
ence gives us fresh assurance
of His Mercy to us; and His
constant Preservation of us,
is only to give us larger Op-
portunities of qualifying our-
selves for a more Glorious
State: He is always wait-
ing

ing to be Gracious, and all that He requires of us is, that we should believe His Promises, and shew our Reliance upon them, by a chearful Obedience to all His Commands, a pious Resignation to His Will, and a certain Expectation of a happy Issue out of all our Afflictions, through an entire Dependance on His Goodness.

For since the constant and wise Order of Nature gives us undeniable Proofs of a *Providence*, and every Day's Experience teaches us, that our Preservation, as well as our first Being, is wholly
ow-

On G R I E F. 145

owing to its All-wise Goodness and Bounty, with what chearful Resignation and Submission of our selves, and all that we have any Relation to, ought we to acknowledge its Right and Sovereignty over us; and commit our selves to Him, *who careth for us. For in Him, we live, move, and have our Being.*

As it is *He that made us, and not we our selves*, so do all the Mercies and Blessings we enjoy, proceed from Him. But these generally slide away unregarded, because common to us. But when Afflictions or Mises-

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ries

ries overtake us, we are apt either to call His Being or His Justice in question. We claim the First as our due; and complain when we are oppress'd with Evil, that His *Ways are Unequal*.

Did we always think it our indispensable Duty, to have a special Regard to *G O D* and *Providence* in all our Actions, to consult what we find most agreeable to His Will, and always measure our Actions by it: we should find Him a *G O D at Hand* to us in all Conditions, and our best Support under all Adversities. We should then be always mindful, that
what-

whatsoever we enjoy is not properly our Own, but only lent us for a time. And that the same Hand, that bestowed all our Good things upon us, may withdraw them from us, when He thinks convenient, without doing us the least Injury. That they were granted us upon Conditions, and not to continue Ours for ever. And that if we set too high a Value upon them, and forget Him that gave them, we only take a Method, that will some time or other assuredly make us Miserable. For we are never in greater danger of being de-

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priv'd

priv'd of any Earthly Enjoyment, than when we are too fond of it, and set our Hearts so much upon it, as to make it our Chief, if not only, Happiness.

For when the Affections are depraved by Sensual Enjoyments, there is a necessity of meeting with Crosses and Troubles, that the Miseries and Disappointments that befall us in the very same Instances, may correct and chastise us for the Excess of Pleasure we formerly took in them. And this Method Providence often makes use of, as very necessary to convince us of our Errors in
over

over-valuing the Objects of a misguided Passion.

It I am convinc'd that *G O D* Governs the World, and that he has a Right and Sovereignty over all His Creatures, and may order and dispose of them, as He thinks best, to answer the Great and Wise Ends of His *Providence*, it is my Duty patiently to submit to His Appointment, without questioning either His Wisdom or Justice. For an Humble submission to all the Methods of Providence, is a direct Inference from the Belief of it. And to repine at any of its Dispensations is

either to question the Principles of Religion, or the Care of Providence over us. We came into this World not to Command, but to Obey. And have these Bounds set us, as well to be the guide of our Actions, as the subject of our Petitions, *Not Our Will, but His be done.*

But besides, how much better is it for us, chearfully and submissively to resign our selves to all the Appointments of Providence, than to do it by force or compulsion. Obey we must, whether we are willing or no. There is no *Contending with God*; For who can say unto Him,

On G R I E F. 151

Him, *What doest Thou?* If He speaks the word, we are Consumed; *If He taketh away our Breath, we die, and are turned again to our Dust.*

But another great Consideration to perswade us to a willing and chearful Submission to all the Appointments of God's Providence is, that whatsoever Troubles or Afflictions He lays upon us; they are designed for our Good. He that is All Goodness Himself, does nothing but what tends to promote that Great End. He is a Tender and Merciful Father as well as a just Judge; and all the healing

Methods of God's Providence are directed to no other purpose, than to restore the Soul to its primitive Purity, and to invite us to Obedience, and persuade us to lay hold of his Mercy and Loving-kindness, that we may escape the severe Effects of his Justice. All the means that He makes use of by His Providence, are for our Benefit, though the manner of His dispensing of them may be different: sometimes he invites us with Promises, and if those can't awaken us, then he pursues us with Threatnings; sometimes he
af-

afflicts us, that our Vertues may be confirm'd by the Use and Exercise of Patience: and at other times he lays heavy Crosses upon us, least a too long Course of Felicity should make us become Remiss and Luxuriant. For did we make a right use of our Enjoyments, we should never be terrified or dejected with Afflictions; they would be only as gentle Chastisements, to incite and quicken our Diligence, but not abate our Courage, or stop us in our way to Happiness. But the case of most of us is far different, we forget *G O D* in our Prosperity,

perity, and in our Adversity complain of him. Did we look back to the Causes of his Anger, and not only consider the Effects of it, we should see great Reason to acknowledge the Justice of his Providence, and that we alone *have done Wickedly*, and that all *His Judgments are Righteous*. For if we have not been sufficiently Thankful for the Goodness of Providence to us, why should we repine if it tries other Methods to reduce us to Obedience, and an acknowledgment of God's Sovereignty over us?

How

On G R I E F. 155

How can we say *that God hath forgotten to be Gracious or that his Mercy is clean gone for ever* ; When our Sins are the only Cause of our Sufferings ? All that he designs is to shew us, that 'tis our Interest as well as Duty to remember him in every Condition of our Lives : and that a Dependence upon him is the only Support under all Afflictions , and the best Comfort against all the Apprehensions of Evil for the future. And that he is the only Security against all the dangers and mischiefs to which the Frailties and Infirmities of our Nature
con-

continually expose us.

What a Happiness is it for us that we have an *All-sufficient God* to take care of us, when nothing else can; to relieve us in our greatest Straits and Exigencies, and to comfort us under our sharpest Sufferings? And all this upon the easy Condition of our Dependence upon him for every thing that we want, and our Submission to his Will in the various Dispensations of his *Providence*, either in correcting us for the Sins we have Committed, or in punishing us for some Omission of our Duty.

What

What is there then, that can shake the Constancy of our Mind, or disturb the Peace and Tranquillity that will always attend it, if we have Almighty Goodness, Mercy, and Compassion, to be our Defence and Comfort? If he takes away any of our Enjoyments, it is only to endear Himself the more to us; and to shew us that he is constantly One and the same, Good and Gracious to us, able to satisfy all our Desires, and to supply all our Wants: and how all things here are Frail and Uncertain, as well as very Imperfect, and altogether un-

unsatisfying, though they might be enjoy'd for ever.

If he deprives us of our dearest Friends and Relations; he does it with a design of being a Friend Himself to us; and that he may have the first Place in our Affections, who is always ready to assist and counsel us in all our Adversities, and is as willing as he is able to do it.

But he is not only desirous of helping us in all our Necessities, but is always present to us. And whenever we are pressed with any sudden and unexpected Calamities, if we apply our
selves

felves to him, we are certain, either to have them remov'd from us, or be endued with sufficient Strength to bear up against them. His Hand is never shortned, and though he may withdraw some of our Blessings from us, for some Ends best known to Himself, yet he is still able to give us Greater. He has always innumerable Mercies in store, his Goodness can never be exhausted. And he is able to confer Blessings upon us, as far above what we can conceive, as they are above what we can deserve.

Were the Joys of the
next

next Life mean and inconsiderable, and not to be compared with those this World affords us, there might be some appearance of Reason, for the placing our Affections upon the Delights and Entertainments of Sense; and for the continually lamenting the loss of those, who have been taken from this to a far worse State. But since they are such, *as Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, nor can it enter into the Heart of Man to conceive*, we ought to engage our Thoughts there, and let no Worldly Interest withdraw our Minds from the delightful

ful Contemplations of that Glorious Fruition. For it is an undervaluing of those Celestial Enjoyments, to suffer any Considerations or Disappointments from without to alienate our Affections from them. Nor can we more depretiate the Glory of the other World, than by setting up any other Desires in competition with it.

How ought we then to acquiesce in all the Acts of his *Providence*, and not to distrust his Kindness and Goodness to us, but to endeavour to submit in all things to his Will and Pleasure, though his Proceedings are never so di-

directly contrary to the present Bent of our Affections. Though he takes from us those we had the most tender and sincere Affection for, and strips us of all our Worldly Enjoyments, If *His Will be done*, why should *We* be dissatisfied? Our Crimes and Offences against him, have certainly deserved greater Punishments than those he inflicts upon us. And we have reason not so much to complain of the severity of our Sufferings, as to be thankful that they are no greater, and that they are far short of what our Sins deserve.

From

From all this it appears, that our Afflictions are designed by *Providence* to work for *Good to us*: And that if we take care to submit ourselves chearfully and patiently to *GOD's* Will and Pleasure in every Condition of Life, He will not only support and comfort us under all Afflictions, and give us Strength to bear them, be they never so heavy upon us; but will also make them an occasion of greater Good to us, by turning them to our Advantage, in order to promote our future *Happiness*, and quicken our Endeavours in the Search after it.

And

And this brings me to consider in the next place, that other Branch of *Religion*, which I mentioned, as very necessary to the supporting us under all the Sufferings of this Life; *The Immortality of the Soul*.

This is that Doctrine, that so much endears to us the Practice of Vertue, and persuades us to forego all the Pleasures of Sense; and resist all the Temptations which this World offers us, if they stand in Competition with the Precepts of Vertue. The Belief of this gives Life to all our Religious Endeavours, encourages us to a vigo-

vigorous Prosecution of our Duty, and makes the Reflection upon our past Life pleasant and delightful to us. The certain Hopes and Expectations of another Life after this, invite us to such an eager pursuit after it, that we ought to be little concern'd for any thing that may befall us here. Whatever Calamities may threaten us in this World, they can only hurt the Body, we may keep the Soul free and untoucht: That, after a little time, will be subject to Mortality, and crumble again into its Primitive Dust; but This will Live for Ever, and
be

be Eternally Happy or Miserable. Why shou'd we then be concern'd, at the Loss of any of our *Friends*; For 'tis the Body only, the worst Part of them, that's subjected to Mortality; the Soul's return'd to *God that gave it*. And though *it* is now separated from us, yet after a Moment we shall meet again. It is a great Comfort against the Loss of Friends, that they are not quite taken from us. When we have run out that short, inconsiderable space of time, that is between us and Eternity, we shall arrive together at the same Place, and be for
Ever

Ever inseparably Happy.

What Reason have I then to repine at my being now separated from them, whom after a very few days I shall see again. Why should a short Parting make the rest of my Days uneasy, which I ought to spend in the delightful Contemplation of those Joys, which our next Meeting will give us a full and an everlasting Possession of? Could I confine my Hopes to the next Life, I should be but little concern'd at what may happen to me in this. Should I lose my Friends and Relations, One of the greatest Supports and Com-

Comforts of this Life, yet I should be fortified against it. I know I must lose Them, or they Me. What matters it who goes First? We shall at length meet again, and participate together of those boundless Pleasures, which shall not end, till Eternity it self shall cease to be.

But besides, we can't say, that they are hastily snatcht from us, who by the Improvements of their Minds in all the Excellencies of Knowledge, which they had also copied out in their Practice, had answer'd all the Ends and Designs of Living; and who, if we consider them

them in relation to themselves, had liv'd here long enough; though for our own sakes, and the Good of others, we could have wisht them a much longer stay, more to serve our own, than, (which would be more generous) to consult their Interest. For since we must Die at last, what does it signify, if we leave this World something sooner, than perhaps in the Course of Nature we might have done; nay rather, is it not much more preferable to be deliver'd out of this troublesome Passage to obtain an immortal Life?

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How

How Happy then will that State be, wherein we can only be said properly to live: For what we call Life here, says *Tully*, is *only Death*; nor does the Mind truly Live till releas'd from the Clogs and Fetters of the Body, it enjoys Eternity. We ought not therefore to think Death an Evil, but rather the greatest of Benefits: Because as it eases us of all those Miseries which Life brought upon us, so it gives us a perfect and serene Prospect of Joy and Peace hereafter. If therefore we are born and live Miserable, and die Blessed, who would
not

not rather chuse to be made
Happy by being disunited
from this Body, than to live
under a constant Oppression
of Miseries? We are all of
us weary of Life, why should
we be afraid to Die? If Suf-
ferings and Afflictions are
uneasy and burthensome to
us, why should we be unwil-
ling to welcome that, which
is the best Remedy for them?
And that it is design'd as a
Token of *God's* Favour and
Kindness to us, seems plain
by His frequent calling a-
way the Best soonest from
this to a better State, there-
by to free them from all the
Evils and Calamities which

this Life is liable to. And also to teach us that stay behind, to be neither too fond of this Life, nor afraid of Death, which Heaven has bestowed as a Blessing upon those, who were best prepared for it.

And this shews us that *God* is not only Just in appointing Death to all Men, but that his Wisdom and Goodness eminently appear in it, since it is so much for the Advantage of Mankind, to exchange this Imperfect and Troublesome Condition, for that most Durable and Perfect, prepared for us in the Heavens.
Hence

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Hence we may learn the vast Disproportion between this Life and the other: For was not the next Life infinitely better than this, *God* would not so soon remove those to that other State, who have used their best Endeavours to live in Conformity to all the Divine Precepts in this.

From hence it appears if we have any love for *Happiness*, how desireable Death ought to be to us; and if we think it our Interest to desire it as best for our selves, we ought to esteem it as such for our Friends too. For can we wish better to our selves,

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than

than to those we have the most tender Affection for? Or would we have our selves only Happy and them *Miserable*? Or are we displeas'd that they are blessed by Death, while we are incumbered and troubled with Life? If we are not, what is it that makes us Impatient at their being deliver'd from all those Dangers and Adversities, those Sorrows and Vexations, which they had here every moment experience of.

If the Story which is told us of some of the Heathens weeping at the Birth of their Children, and rejoycing

ing at their Death, as looking upon one the Beginning and the other the End of their Miseries, may find any Credit with us, methinks it should give us a far different *Idea* of Humane Nature, than we seem to have been yet acquainted with, or make us asham'd of our Practice in a Religion, which lays before us the greatest Motives and Advantages to invite us to our Duty, and not only gives us the best Rules to direct us, but also encourages us, with the most certain Promises, of far greater and more durable Rewards than any other Religion

ligion can pretend to. It is a great disgrace and scandal to our Profession, that notwithstanding, we have greater Expectations, and larger Assistances in all our Necessities, yet to be outdone by *Heathens* in a principal Part of our Duty. They saw the defects of our Nature, and the certainty of our Miseries, and though they could not search into the hidden Causes of them, and know from whence to derive a Remedy for them, yet they were sensible there was more Happiness to be expected in *Death*, than in the mean and imperfect Satisfaction.

tisfaction of *Life*. Of the one they had already sufficient Experience, and since they found in themselves a natural Desire after Happiness, they concluded, that either that Desire was implanted in them in vain, or else it must be expected in the other Life. This at least they were certain of, that this Life was a Burthen to them, and therefore those were to be accounted most happy, who were soonest releast from the Miseries of it.

If Reason could go so far by its own Strength, what may not we expect from it,

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when 'tis improved by the Advantages of *Revelation*; which not only leads us to the Causes and Original of our Miseries, and shews us from whence they sprung, but also teaches us how to subdue our inordinate Passions, which still foment them in us, by laying before us the great Helps and Assistances we shall find, if we use our best Endeavours to overcome them; and that if we patiently submit our selves to the Hand of *Providence*, it will order all things for our Good, and make even Death it self, the beginning of an immortal Life to us, and
tran-

translate us to those happy Mansions, which we shall inhabit for ever with those whom we so Dearly Esteem'd, and who made even this troublesome Life while here, almost pleasant and desirable to us. What Joy will it be to meet, embrace and converse with, our Friends and Relations, who will be then Ours for Ever! What great Motives have we then, patiently to bear our Troubles and Sufferings, considering the *Recompence of the Reward hereafter!*

But some perhaps may say, they could bear with the Loss of their Friends,
were

were they satisfied of their Happiness in the Other World. To this we may answer, that it does not belong to us to search into the *Hidden Counsels of God*. We are taught to have *Charity* for all Men, and we ought not especially to deny it to our Dearest Friends. But besides if they had all that Sweetness of *Temper*, that *Candour*, *Gentleness* and *Charity* towards Others, which usually make Men respected and admired here, join'd with a true sense of *Religion*, a just Demeanour to all the Truths and Promises of it, and a sincere *Obedience* to its Laws
and

and Precepts, though mixt with the common Infirmities of *Mortality*, we are in Duty oblig'd to think, that they enjoy the Benefits and Rewards annext to their sincere and faithful Endeavours. We may add to this, that those earnest Desires which we find in our selves, of enjoying them longer here, seem to insinuate and whisper to us, that they, whose Conversations were, so innocent and agreeable to us, and made so great a part of our Happiness here, can never fall short of that themselves in another Life, which they always most passionately
ly

ly endeavour'd, tho' in an inferior Degree to promote in this.

What is there then left for us to Grieve at ? Let us take an Estimate, not of our Loss, but their Gain. And if we can't as yet be Happy, let us content our selves with thinking that they are so. Nor ought we so much to lament their being already taken from us, as be thankful that we have enjoy'd them so long. And besides, that as our Grief can do our selves no kindness, so would it be very displeasing to them, were they sensible of it; or could receive any
dimi-

diminution in their *Happiness*, by any thing that is done here below.

¶ But besides, tho' our *Grief* can be no Kindness or Satisfaction to them, yet it is a great Dis-kindness to our selves: For it does not only torment and disquiet us, and make every thing of this Life unpleasant and distasteful to us; but also makes us unfit to regard our Concerns in order to the next. For our Thoughts are then so vehemently taken up with our Loss, and our Reason so totally obscur'd by the Violence of our Passion, that we are neither at liberty to
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recover the one, nor command the other; whereby to become sensible of our Duty, and perform it according to that just Seriousness and Attention that is required of us. But moreover, Religion requires great Cheerfulness and Alacrity in the performance of its Duties, we are and thereupon also, very much unqualified for the right Exercise of it, whilst we suffer our selves to be carried away by a quite different disposition of Mind. We ought therefore for our own Sakes so to moderate this almost ungovernable *Passion*, especially if we let
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it get ground upon us, that we may not fall short of the due Observance of our Religious Duties, by indulging our Passions and Affections. And certainly, 'tis one great Reason why, when the one is enjoined, the other is forbidden, because they can't both consist together. For I can neither be so sincerely Thankful for the protection of Providence over me for the time past, nor beg its Care for the future, if I am dissatisfied at any of its Dispensations, or am unwilling to submit to any of its Corrections.

We

We ought therefore to endeavour by all means possible to subdue this Passion of *Grief* in us, by considering in the Third and last place, the dangerous Consequences that will unavoidably follow our too much giving way to it.

It impairs our *Health* and *Constitution*, waists our Strength, obstructs the free motion of our Blood and Spirits, and exhausts and impoverishes the whole frame of our Nature. Nor is immoderate Grief only prejudicial to our Body, but the evil Effects of it penetrate even to the very Soul it self.

For

For the Understanding becomes darkned, and is not at liberty either to advise it self, or hearken to the Counsel of others. For it is so violently bent upon the Contemplation of an appearing Misery, that it cannot pass a free and impartial Judgment upon it. And in this case also, the Will is generally so obstinate, that it prevents the Operations and Exercise of *Reason*. And where the Will is prejudiced 'tis generally very difficult to rectify the Understanding. For whatsoever I will or chuse as best for me, my Understanding is apt to find
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some excuse or pretence to comply with it. And whensoever the Understanding is thoroughly convinc'd of the agreeableness and innocence of any Action, and the necessity of it, so long as it continues under that Conviction, the Will can hardly resist its Dictates. For whatsoever it is that my Understanding proposes as best for me, and if I do really believe it as such, my Will can't help preferring the Choice of that before any thing besides. And if the Action be really unlawful, 'tis as well the Fault of my Understanding as Will,
be-

because every Action that I do has a present appearance of Good to perswade me to it : which if it prove to be otherwise, the Understanding as well as the Will is to answer for it.

Immoderate *Grief* is also prejudicial to our Reason, by being a Blemish and Reproach to it. What advantage would it be to us, to search into the secrets of Nature, to know the Qualities and Essences of Things, to contemplate on the Perfections of the Celestial Beings, and look even into *Eternity* it self : To know what our Soul is, and how
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it is endued with Reason, the *Image of God Himself*; to distinguish Good and Evil, and to know that the One is to be avoided, and the Other to be embraced, and to enjoy innumerable other good Things, which Rational Beings are alone capable of; if after all, we cannot make use of our Knowledge, and noble Endowments, to the suppressing the Miseries of Life, and to the raising our selves above any of the Dangers which threaten us in this mortal State? I mean the acquiring such a Superiority and Greatness of Mind, as
will

will keep us from falling under the *Pressures* of our Sufferings, tho' it exempt us not from the sense of them. What is it that gives us the Advantage over the Beasts and Irrational Beings, if we depend wholly upon things without us, and have neither Courage or Constancy within to support us? All our Gifts and Faculties would be in vain bestowed upon us, if they could not exalt us above the Evils and Inconveniencies of Sense. If we can find Antidotes against Poyson, if we can make use of Industry to keep us from Poverty, and if Reason

son can supply us with Preservatives against a great many other Evils, why should we banish the Use of it, when we have most occasion for it, either to counsel or advise us against apparent Calamities, or to support us under the present Anguish of our *Griefs* and *Afflictions*?

But in the next place, Immoderate Grief is of a very dangerous Consequence, as it is *prejudicial to Religion*. For it not only slackens our Endeavours, and puts a stop to our Practice of Vertue and Piety, by taking the first and greatest possession of

of our Minds: but also, as was before observ'd, brings a scandal upon our most Holy Profession; as though it was not sufficient to secure us from the force and violence of this *unruly Passion*. For it looks like a great dishonour to Religion, that notwithstanding all the Advantages it proposes to us, all the Helps and Assistances it gives us whereby to strengthen and support the Weakness and Infirmities of our Nature, against the Storms and Insults that may threaten it from abroad, yet that those who through the whole Behaviour of their
I Lives,

Lives, and by their constant observance of all the other necessary parts of their Duty seem to have the fairest Title to *Vertue and Religion*, should at last sink under the Pressure of an unavoidable Calamity. And this we ought the rather to take notice of, because those who make it their Business to cavil at Religion, seem to derive their chief Arguments from the Lives and Practice of those that profess it.

For they imagine, that they may justly call in question the Principles of Religion, and even Providence
it

it self, if those who seem most to live up to the Rules of the one, and rely upon the Goodness and Care of the other, should fail in any part of their Duty to either, and become as Miserable, notwithstanding the promised Helps and Advantages of Religion, and the Protection of Providence, as those who live *without any God in the World*. I shall not now enter into a Dispute with these Unreasonable Men, (who think a Slip or Failing of a Good Man, a sufficient Argument to shake the very Foundations of Religion) but shall only add, that

we ought to be very careful in the Discharge of every part of our Duty, least our Neglect should give Occasion to our Adversaries to reproach our Religion, or to the *Enemies of God to Blaspheme.*

But in the last place, the greatest Danger that our *immoderate Grief* at any Loss we receive, can bring upon us, is, that it will provoke *Providence* to inflict greater Evils upon us. God expects a chearful Submission from us to all his Appointments, and that we should patiently wait upon his Will and Pleasure for the Event of all, who

who hath promised neither to *leave nor forsake us*, if we put *our Trust in his Mercy*. An *Humble Spirit* is the best Sacrifice we can Offer up to him. And nothing is more displeasing to him, than to murmur or repine at any of his Corrections. All his Judgments are done in Justice and Equity ; but for us to find fault with them, is to make our selves Wiser than He.

How careful then ought we to be, least by our immoderate Sorrow for any Affliction he hath laid upon us, we should seem displeased at any of his Doings,

and thereby draw down his Vengeance upon us. For who can stand before him, when *once he is Angry*? Diffidence or Distrust of God is one of the greatest Sins we can be guilty of against him, because it seems to question those great and tender Attributes, his *Goodness and Mercy*; and therefore if we offend in that kind, we may be assured, that he will not let so great a Sin go unpunished, but will make use of another Attribute, that of his *Justice*, to convince us of the Abuse we had made of his *Mercy*.

It

It is our Duty then, gratefully to acknowledge the Goodness of *God* continually to us, and not repine because we may think we are now become Miserable, but be thankful to him that we were not always so. He is under no Obligations to make us Happy but what proceed from his own Good will and Pleasure. How then ought we in Wisdom as well as Justice, to resign all that we have a Concern for, to his alone Disposal, who orders all things so for our Happiness, as though he could do no otherwise; and who contrives every thing

so much for our Good, as if He Himself could not be Happy, unless We also were so too ; and who has done so much already to advance our Interest, that we have the greatest Reason to believe, that it will be our fault, if he be not always the same to us. | If we consider the Mercies we have receiv'd, and weigh them against the Evils we have suffered, we shall find infinitely greater Cause to be continually breaking forth into Expressions of Praise and Thanksgiving for our Enjoyments, than to repine at our Miseries. What mighty
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On G R I E F. 201

ty Returns of Gratitude
should this one amazing
Consideration draw from
us, that notwithstanding all
our Provocations, He is Li-
beral, Gracious and Merciful
to us, and that we still
receive new Mercies from
him, though our Sins against
him have deserv'd the great-
est of Punishments. I shall
beg leave to add to this, that
admirable Passage of that
Great Emperour *Marcus An-*
toninus. ' Can God, says he,
' for the Succession of so
' many Ages bear without In-
' dignation, with so Great,
' and so many Sinners as
' have ever yet been : and
I 5 ' not

‘not only so, but also pro-
‘vide for them, that they
‘want nothing; and doest
‘thou, so violently grieve at
‘any thing He hath taken
‘from thee, as One that
‘could bear with Him no
‘longer, Thou that art but
‘for a moment of time, yea,
‘Thou, that art one of those
‘Sinners thy self?

And thus I have gone
through what I at first in-
tended, in offering several
Arguments which I thought
most necessary and useful, as
well for the preventing our
Sorrows and Afflictions, as
for the supporting us under
them. For if we really think
it

it worth our while to purchase to our selves true Peace and Tranquillity of Mind, we shall certainly find that these Considerations which I have insisted upon, may be of great Moment to us towards the procuring of it.

For if we first of all wou'd fix in our Minds true Notions of all outward Things, with the real Uses and Ends of them, how that they were lent us by Providence, to try our Prudence in the management of them, and not to be made the Subject of our Happiness, but only the Exercise of our Vertues, we should

should certainly reap these Advantages from it. First, whatever outward Blessings *Providence* bestows upon us we should receive them with all Thankfulness, as Blessings which flowed to us from God's immediate Bounty, and not given us upon any account of our own Deservings. And Secondly, we should use them with *Moderation*, and not fix our Hearts and Minds upon them; and then this would teach us in the Third place, to bear the Loss of them *with Patience*. Because we should consider them as Things not really our own, but His that gave them

them to us, and that not absolutely, but upon Conditions, such as give us only a limited use of them, but leave to *Providence* the absolute Right and Disposal of them.

And from these Conclusions, what I observ'd in the Second place will necessarily follow, that it is our chiefest Interest, to live up exactly to the Principles of *Religion*, which will guide us to the great Foundation of all Happiness, the *Resigning up our selves* to the Will and Pleasure of Providence, which knows what is convenient for us, better than we
our

our selves can, and out of Compassion to our Ignorance and Infirmary, will find out means whereby to make us Happy, which we perhaps thought could only make us Miserable; and be our Comfort and Support under all Afflictions here, and advance us to *Immortality*, and the Perfection of Happiness hereafter. For how great soever our Sorrows are here, they will be then sufficiently, and abundantly made up with *fulness of Joy and Pleasures for evermore*.

What Reason have we then to repine at any Afflictions or Sufferings of this Life,

Life, which are so very advantageous to us? For they not only give us a sence of our own Imperfections, and of the Vanity and Uncertainty of all things under the Sun, as well as their insufficiency for our Happiness, but lead us thither for our Comfort, where all *Perfection dwells*, and teach us to rely wholly upon Him for our Happiness, who has alone the Power to bestow it upon us. So that at length to our unspeakable Satisfaction, we shall be obliged to confess, that all his *Judgments* are as well the Effects of His *Goodness, Mercy* and
Cons.

Compassion, as of His Justice, and that out Of very Faithfulness he hath caused us to be troubled.

What great Satisfaction, should this one Consideration raise in our Mind, that God will be a present Help to us in time of Trouble, and though all our Friends and Relations should either forsake us, or be parted from us, yet *The Lord upholdeth us with his Right Hand.* Their Kindness may be great to us, and they may be willing to serve us to the utmost of their Power, yet they are Defective in a great many things, and come infinitely

finitely short of *Him*, who can command all things in Heaven and Earth, and is the sole *All-sufficient Good*. They have innumerable Imperfections: but He is *Perfect Goodness*. They mutable and uncertain: He always *the same, firm and unchangeable*. They may be taken from us, but *Him* who is *Eternal*, we can never be deprived of. How Happy then will our State be, when we can say, *Whom have we in Heaven but Thee, and there is none upon Earth that we desire in Comparison of Thee. When our Heart, and our Strength fails us, God will*
be

*be the Strength of our Hearts,
and our Portion for ever.
Though we may be troubled on
every side, yet shall we not be
distressed, though perplexed,
yet not in Despair : though
persecuted, yet not forsaken ;
though cast down, yet not De-
stroyed.*

The Hopes and Expecta-
tions of being thus Happy,
might certainly so far en-
gage our Thoughts and Af-
fections, as to wean us from
this World, where we can
meet with nothing but
Trouble and Vexation, if
we fix our Minds upon it.
Especially if we seriously
consider the dangerous Con-
se-

sequences that always attend those who make this Life and the Enjoyments of it their Happiness. For whatever these Enjoyments are, they are accompanied with Trouble, and end in Misery. For either they must leave us, or we them; and which soever it be, we must certainly be Miserable, because we are depriv'd of that which alone we made our *Happiness*, and therefore are neither prepared nor capacitated for any other.

But besides we ought to consider, that Time is precious, and given us for greater Ends, than to be spent

spent upon any Worldly Concern, either in over-valuing our outward Things, by taking too great a Pleasure in the Enjoyment, or by an unjust Complaint at the Loss of them. All is little enough to be spent upon the Thoughts of another Life, and not to be misemployed, in shewing our over-fondness of this. If we were to stay here always, we ought to take care, to fix our *Affections* here too, and place them upon Objects most agreeable to us. But since *Providence* has allotted us but a short Continuance here, and has suited the Fa-
brick

brick of our Bodies to the shortness of our Stay, and provided us another Life after this, unchangable and immortal, we ought in Prudence to bestow our first Care and Affections upon that. And if any thing which we Dearly Esteem'd, has been translated from us, to that other State of immortality, before we were willing to part with it, we ought also to follow it thither with our Thoughts and Affections, and not with our *Tears and Complaints*; and conform our present Condition as much as possible to that which our *Friends*
who

who are gone before us do already enjoy. Death is only a putting off these Bodies, the leaving This, and changing it for another Place of Habitation; and not a ceasing to be, or a falling into Nothing. And though it is an Admission into that invisible State, which no mortal Eye can enter; yet our Minds may keep a Spiritual Conversation with those more Perfect Beings, and may still enjoy them by the Eye of Faith, though not by that of Sense.

Perfect Happiness was never designed for this Life, nor can we expect it; for
if

if it was, there would be nothing left for us to enjoy in the Next. But yet it may be in our Power to make large Additions to it, and to advance by Degrees more and more to that *Perfection*, which will be Consummate hereafter.

And to this End we may make use of our Afflictions, which the Loss of *Friends* brings upon us, to the putting us in mind of our own *Mortality*; which by our continual Remembrance of it, will admonish us to grow better, and more fit for *Happiness*. Nor will it suffer us to apply our Minds to those things,

things, which will stop us in our Advances thither: And perhaps it was for this Reason that we have lost what we now Grieve for, because we fixt our Minds so much upon it, that we had not leisure to think of another Life, which should have no Obstacles to withdraw our Thoughts from it.

To conclude, We ought not to be concern'd too much at any thing that may befall us here; because we can't enter into the State of the Blessed, till we have taken off our Minds from all Sensual and Earthly Desires. We must shake off these Clogs,

Clogs, before we can be admitted into Happiness. We can't enter into Life *half* and *maimed*; we must carry nothing thither but spiritual Minds, heavenly Thoughts, and exalted Desires, without any mixture, or allay of Sense. We must temper our Affections to those Mansions of Pleasures, if ever we expect a Fruition of them. We can never see *God*, nor enjoy the Beatifick Vision with the Eye of Sense. We must be purified and refin'd, before we can behold those Glorious Objects; and exchange our vitiated Palates, for some more exquisitely

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per-

perfect, if we design to tast
of the *Supper of the Lamb*.
We must *wipe all Tears from*
our Eyes, if we expect to
gain admittance there, *where*
there is neither Grief nor Sor-
row any more, where there
are only *Hallelujahs*, Praises
and Thanksgivings to Him
that *sitteth on the Throne for*
ever and ever.

What Joy and Transport
do the frequent Meditations
upon another Life, raise in
the Minds of Good Men!
With what Comfort and Sa-
tisfaction do they perform
all the Duties of Religion!
How Fervent in their Pray-
ers, how Constant and Joy-
ful

ful in their Thanksgivings!
 How Ravishing are their
 Hopes, how few their Fears!
 In a word, their Thoughts
 are so wholly taken up with
 the Meditations of the next
 Life, that they are little
 concern'd for any thing of
 this. If they suffer Scorn or
 Reproach from Men, or feel
 the immediate Hand of *God*
 upon them in Afflictions,
 they turn all to a good Use,
 and endeavour to grow bet-
 ter by them. They know
though they sow in Tears, they
shall reap in Joy: That is,
 their Joys shall be abun-
 dantly greater than ever
 their Sorrows were. They
 shall

shall drink Rivers of Pleasure for every Tear that fell from their Eyes: And for One Moment of Sorrow, They shall receive Eternal Blessedness, and be for Ever entertain'd with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory. Wherefore let us Comfort one another with these Words.

The End.

E R R A T A.

P⁴g. 50. lin. 16. del. it. p. 51. l. 3. r. so do.
 p. 78. l. 4. del. in p. 85. l. 12. r. sensible of. l.
 12. r. Man. p. 107. l. 5. r. 20. p. 121. l. 14. del.
 our. p. 154. l. n. del. and.



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